



The City of  
**OKLAHOMA CITY**  
FIRE DEPARTMENT  
GARY MARRS  
Fire Chief

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March 21, 1997

Chairman Reed Hundt  
FCC Commission  
Fax (202) 418-2801

Dear Chairman Hundt:

I am writing on behalf of the nation's state and local organizations responsible for the protection, safety and emergency rescue of Americans and their property to urge you to ensure that the Commission take immediate action on the plan to address the urgent and long-term public safety telecommunications needs of state and local governments. Our letter is about public safety and immediate federal action. This issue is of such critical importance to the protection of not just American men and women who risk their lives when tragedy strikes, but also to protect and respond when lives and property are at stake at times of natural disasters, domestic terrorism, or daily fire emergencies and crimes or accidents that require emergency response that we urge your earliest consideration of our concerns. We urge you to take every step to oppose any effort to interfere with or delay action on this plan. Specifically, we urge you to eliminate digital allotments in the channels between 60-69, to maximize recovery within those channels, to set aside 24 MHz of spectrum exclusively for state and local public safety, and to act prior to April 1, 1997.

Last September, the Public Safety Wireless Advisory Committee (PSWAC), created by the NTIA and the FCC, issued its final report and recommendations to Congress and the administration. The Committee included representatives of the Pentagon and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as well as key public safety representatives from state and local governments.

The report determined that state and local governments have less than half the spectrum necessary to effectively and efficiently protect the lives and property of our citizens. A key recommendation of PSWAC was that the FCC reallocate 24 megahertz from UHF channels 60-69 for public safety.

We regard immediate and positive action on these recommendations as among the most critical public safety policy issues before the federal government. We anticipate positive results and look to you specifically to ensure that happens.

To us, this vote will be a litmus test about commitment to public safety.

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Last week some Members of Congress raised the issue of the potential impact of the FCC's rule making proceeding with respect to low power television (LPTV) and translator stations. We are pleased that the letter did not, however, suggest that the FCC retreat from its plan to reallocate channels 60-69. Any delay or retreat would have consequences for every community and every man and woman involved in the protection of lives and property. The public safety community fully understands the position of the LPTV broadcasters. There is clearly enough spectrum in the proposed core to support the transition to ATV. It is our position that the current regulations have fostered the lack of available spectrum for public safety.

In some instances LPTV is in much the same position as public safety by having to coexist with the major broadcasters. Proponents of digital television have stated that new digital technology will allow the easing of co-channel and adjacent channel restrictions, thereby allowing TV channels to be reused more efficiently. This technology alone will free up additional spectrum that can be used for LPTV.

The Commission now has the opportunity to compress the present TV spectrum allocations into a reasonable core. Digital technology and compression of the core spectrum will allow the FCC to begin fulfilling the recommendations of the Public Safety Wireless Advisory Committee's Final Report, dated September 11, 1996. In our opinion, the technical parameters for close spacing of digital channels will be greatly improved through ATV technology, thus permitting more efficient use of this spectrum.

In summary, the public safety community understands the position of the LPTV broadcasters. If the Digital TV technical improvements are proved to be as stated, the Commission should consider relaxing the spacing regulations, thereby allowing more efficient use of the spectrum. The public safety community cannot support any requests to delay this proceeding any longer. We urge your efforts to press for immediate and positive action by the Commission, because of the impact that any delay will have on the implementation of the Public Safety Wireless Advisory Committee's Final Report recommendations.

We stand ready to meet with you or provide any information that might be of assistance in your consideration. Because of the urgency of this public priority, we will report to our members in every state and every community.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Gary B. Marrs", written in a cursive style.

Gary B. Marrs  
Fire Chief



March 21, 1997

The Honorable Reed Hundt, Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, Suite 814  
Washington, DC 20554

VIA FAX: (202) 418-2801

Dear Chairman Hundt:

On behalf of the users of Chicago Access Network Television, which has served over five-thousand Chicago nonprofits and residents, I respectfully urge you and other members of the Commission to delay issuing "digital" licenses to the broadcast television industry until such time as they are ready to use them, and to demand that television broadcasters compensate the federal government for their use of public property.

As you may know, a number of representatives of the broadcasting industry have announced within the past few weeks that their plans to implement "digital television" have been delayed, with most industry sources stating that the spectrum will be used for the purposes for which it was intended no earlier than 1999, and perhaps even later than that. In the meantime, it is likely that they will begin to use the spectrum for non-television services - services for which the rest of the wireless telecommunications industry has paid market-based rates at public auction. In addition to giving away a valuable public resource, this move will also have the effect of giving broadcasters an unfair competitive advantage in relation to other wireless information service providers.

This is \$70 billion that could be used to provide support for public, educational and governmental ("PEG") access to the broadcast media. Non-commercial, non-profit PEG is a highly successful model for creating and promoting citizen involvement in local media which results in meaningful programming for the local community. PEG access supports distance learning, community involvement and democratic discourse over a variety of media. Now the Commission has an opportunity to give non-profit entities and individuals the ability to generate and disseminate information using the vastly increased carrying capacity of digital television. Funds generated by the sale of digital spectrum at auction would help our children and extend the benefits of the Information Superhighway to all.

We respectfully urge the Commission to hold the issuance of these valuable licenses in abeyance until such time as the broadcasting industry indicates its willingness to adequately compensate American taxpayers for the use of their property.

Sincerely,

Barbara Popovic  
Executive Director

BP/mm

cc: Edward O. Fritts (FAX: (202) 429-5373)  
National Association of Broadcasters

CHICAGO ACCESS CORPORATION

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